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Chair: Mr. Momen ..... (Bangladesh)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Statement by the President of the General Assembly

1. **Mr. Al-Nasser** (Qatar), President of the General Assembly, said that the international community should approach the issues to be addressed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development with an increased sense of urgency and responsibility. The Conference should reconfirm the principles and commitments agreed upon at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (Rio Principles), as well as those set out in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation). The benefits of sustainable development should be extended to people of all countries, in particular countries in special situations.

2. It was essential to build consensus, enhance coordination and cooperation and approve an efficient and effective governance framework for sustainable development. Sufficient political will was required at both the national and international levels in order to ensure the timely provision of resources. Member States that were in position to do so should provide financial support to developing countries requiring assistance in order to participate in the preparatory processes for the Conference. He would do his utmost to enable Member States to exchange lessons learned, bridge the gaps and build consensus leading up to the Conference.

3. It was also necessary to improve disaster prevention and response in order to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities, build resilience and promote sustainable development. The capacity of the United Nations system to address disaster risk reduction and prevention should continue to be strengthened.

4. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/160, he had attended the opening meeting of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa in order to report on the outcome of the September 2011 High-level Meeting on the theme "Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication". It had been evident that the international community was ready to take bold action to address desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development. Inaction risked jeopardizing food security, poverty eradication efforts and biodiversity and could lead to forced migration, adverse impacts on climate change, deforestation, political instability and conflict. He urged the Committee to place desertification, land degradation and drought at the centre of the deliberations at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

5. Looking ahead to the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, he urged Member States to support concrete action on mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology by adopting a comprehensive, equitable and balanced Conference outcome based on the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities. Such an outcome would strengthen global efforts to combat climate change and build on the achievements of the 2010 Cancún Conference.

6. Emphasizing the urgent need to reverse biodiversity loss, he welcomed the finalization and adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The activities undertaken during the International Year of Biodiversity to generate advocacy and awareness were commendable and he looked forward to the adoption of further activities during the United Nations Decade for Biodiversity.

7. In conclusion, he underscored the commitment and leadership demonstrated by the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and by their staff in the field. The work of the Second Committee would provide a vital contribution to the success of the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (A/66/87, A/66/297, A/66/298, A/66/298/Corr.1, A/66/337, A/66/388 and A/66/391)

(a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development** (A/66/287, A/66/304 and A/C.2/66/2)

(b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** (A/66/218 and A/66/278)

(c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction** (A/66/301)

(d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind** (A/66/291)

(e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** (A/66/291)

(f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** (A/66/291)

(g) **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its eleventh special session** (A/66/25, Supp. No. 25)

(h) **Harmony with Nature** (A/66/302)

(i) **Sustainable mountain development** (A/66/294)

(j) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy** (A/66/306)

8. **Mr. Sha** Zukang (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) introduced the reports of the Secretary-General on the protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development (A/66/298), under item 19; and on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/66/287) and on agricultural technology for development (A/66/304), both under sub-item 19 (a). He also introduced the reports of the Secretary-General on concrete recommendations to enhance the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/66/278) and on the review of United Nations system support to small island developing States (A/66/218), both under sub-item 19 (b). In addition, he introduced the reports of the Secretary-General on harmony with nature (A/66/302), under sub-item 19 (h); on sustainable mountain development (A/66/294), under sub-item 19 (i); and on new and renewable sources of energy (A/66/306), under sub-item 19 (j).

9. Twenty years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the world risked irreversible environmental and ecosystem damage and increasing inequality and poverty unless urgent action was taken to overcome the obstacles to sustainable development.

10. Genuine political commitment, clear agendas and international support had led to progress in some areas since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, for example with respect to poverty reduction and increased access to water. Similarly, through the effective transfer and dissemination of ozone-friendly technology, the implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer had significantly reduced the use of ozone-depleting substances. Similar momentum — engaging all countries and underpinned by long-term political commitment and better coordination and coherence among sustainable development institutions — was required in order to accelerate sustainable development.

11. The issues discussed in detail in the reports he was introducing included the need to reverse existing patterns of resource use and depletion; increase the contribution of new and renewable sources of energy to the global energy system; introduce major changes in agriculture and rural development with a view to resolving current food, energy, water and climate challenges; and address major threats to oceans, particularly coral reefs. The vulnerabilities of small island developing States and mountain regions, both of which were disproportionately affected by global challenges, must also be addressed.

12. Noting that all the reports were relevant to the Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in 2012, he said that the report on the Implementation of

Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/66/287) provided an overview of the status of preparations for the Conference and preliminary ideas concerning its organization of work. The Committee would need to discuss the modalities of the Conference during the current session.

13. The Conference should aim to achieve a forward-looking and action-oriented outcome to deal with the challenges of the twenty-first century; an implementation strategy supported by means and resources required to translate the strategy into action; and a renewed commitment by all stakeholders to spare no effort to ensure the implementation of the agreed agenda.

14. **Ms. Figueres** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), speaking by video link from Bonn, introduced the report on the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Cancun, Mexico, 2010, and its follow-up (A/66/291, chap. I). The report provided an overview of the outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The report also included updates on the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol.

15. The 2010 Climate Change Conference had been a success. The fact that the Cancun Agreements had been adopted at the Conference with near unanimity had demonstrated that the Parties were eager to restore confidence in the functioning of the climate change process and to capture progress made since 2008, specifically in the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention.

16. The Agreements formed the basis for the largest collective effort the world had ever seen to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and included the most comprehensive package ever agreed by Governments to help developing countries deal with climate change. They covered, inter alia, adaptation, technology, finance, policy approaches and incentives. The Parties had subsequently achieved substantial progress in their follow-up work in the two ad hoc working groups. Implementation of the Cancun Agreements was well on track.

17. Negotiations under the Kyoto Protocol had clarified the technical issues, thereby paving the way for urgently needed political decisions. The defining challenge facing the Climate Change Conference in Durban was the need to address both the further commitments of developed countries under the Kyoto Protocol and the evolution of the broader mitigation framework under the Convention, while ensuring the differentiated participation of developing countries. In addition, progress was needed regarding long-term finance. While industrialized countries had agreed to mobilize $100 billion annually, a clear decision on a pathway to secure long-term sources of finance was now required.

18. She expressed confidence that, notwithstanding those challenges, the Climate Change Conference in Durban could be another firm step towards a full climate change regime. The Conference must produce an outcome that restored confidence in the ability of the climate change process to act decisively in addressing climate change.

19. **Mr. Gnacadja** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Secretariat), speaking by video link from Bonn, said that the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa had been an unprecedented success. Unmatched political will had prevailed in addressing all issues that had been impeding the implementation of the Convention.

20. One positive step had been the adoption of the decision concerning the governance and institutional arrangements for the Global Mechanism. The Conference had also adopted decisions concerning implementation in respect of science, technology and knowledge-sharing with a view to enabling the Convention to become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification, land degradation and drought; progress in the implementation of the Convention; the mid-term evaluation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the United Nations

Convention to Combat Desertification (2008-2018); collaboration with the Global Environment Facility; and follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on desertification, land degradation and drought and preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

21. Three round tables on matters of the utmost importance had been held during the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties on the themes: "Desertification/land degradation and drought and food security: preserving the resource base for our food security"; "UNCCD in the context of Rio+20: addressing desertification/land degradation and drought as a cornerstone of the green economy"; and "Harnessing science knowledge for combating desertification/land degradation and drought: the path to improvement".

22. In addition, the Government of the Republic of Korea, the host country, had submitted the Changwon initiative, which aimed at furthering the implementation of the Convention and the 10-year strategic plan. The Parties had welcomed the initiative and noted its potential to enhance efforts by countries under their action programmes to address desertification, land degradation and drought.

23. The remarkable success of the session had been preceded by the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the theme "Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication". General Assembly resolution 65/160 provided details regarding the event. At the conclusion of the Meeting the President of the General Assembly had summarized the discussions and had, inter alia, underscored the importance of enhancing the implementation of the Convention and strengthening the science underlying the issues involved.

24. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 65/160 and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (A/66/291, chap. II), he said that the document provided updates on the preparations for the High-level Meeting and reviewed the proceedings and outcomes of the ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology. The report also described activities undertaken in the context of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification and the observance of the 2011 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought and of Land Day.

25. In addition, the report provided information on the status of collaboration with the Global Environment Facility in the light of the amendment of the GEF Instrument to list the Convention among the treaties for which the Facility served as financial mechanism. Details were also given regarding the meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions held in Bonn on 11 April 2011. The report suggested possible actions for the General Assembly to consider, including those relating to raising the profile of desertification, land degradation and drought; strengthening the scientific basis of the Convention; and the new performance review, assessment and monitoring of its implementation. It also addressed the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and encouraged the Assembly to consider the possibility of a "zero net land degradation rate" as a sustainable development target.

26. **Ms. Wahlström** (Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/66/301), said that the report provided an overview of progress at the national, regional and international levels during the past year with respect to disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. The many disasters which had occurred during the previous year had wreaked havoc in developed and developing countries alike, with particularly devastating consequences in low-income countries, especially small island developing States and least developed countries. Although some progress towards building resilience had been achieved, risk management systems and decision-making at the national, subnational and international levels required further critical development, including disaster loss accounting and integrated risk modelling, to support sound development and investment planning.

27. The midterm review of the Hyogo Framework for Action, the first thematic debate on disaster risk reduction, convened by the President of the General Assembly, the six regional platforms for disaster risk reduction, the third session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the findings of the 2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction had highlighted challenges requiring urgent attention. The Secretary-General discussed the challenges in his report and offered recommendations for addressing them.

28. For the remainder of the Hyogo Framework's lifespan and subsequently, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction would continue to lead and coordinate efforts to establish a post-Hyogo consultative process; help Governments and partners realize the potential benefits of disaster risk reduction; provide substantive and technical support to the global, regional and national platforms; and further strengthen the evidence base to support more focused investment. Other critical activities prior to 2015 would include the biennial regional platforms, the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in 2013; the continued production and dissemination of credible evidence to strengthen decision-making in support of disaster risk reduction through the 2013 and 2015 Global Assessment Reports on Disaster Risk Reduction; and work to scale up national disaster loss databases and tracking of disaster risk reduction investments. High priority would also be given to advocacy and outreach work in particular, including mobilizing and influencing key agents of change such as mayors, local governments, the private sector, parliamentarians and young people.

29. The Strategy secretariat would therefore continue to serve as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields. Although many challenges remained in those areas, progress was being made. The secretariat's main priority was to promote the practical application of disaster risk reduction. The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban, continuing work on the Cancun Adaptation Framework, the High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, and the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development would provide important opportunities to incorporate disaster risk reduction into global development processes and the agreements that guided them.

30. **Ms. Castaño** (Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) New York Office), speaking on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, introduced the report of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on the work of its twenty-sixth session (A/66/25). She also introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/66/297).

31. The Council/Forum had expressed concern regarding the serious threats that documented environmental degradation, widespread changes from human activity, natural processes and the loss of ecosystem services posed to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals. The world now faced a sustainability crisis. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development would provide a rare opportunity for the international community to strengthen and retool the United Nations Environment Programme in order to enable it to effectively discharge its duties as the principal United Nations environmental body and to be the leading global environmental authority.

32. She drew attention to the decisions adopted by the Council/Forum on international environmental governance; the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services; the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production; the impact of integrated environmental assessments, chemicals and wastes management; and waste management, including management of electrical and electronic waste.

33. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/66/297), she said that the report had been submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 65/147 and had been prepared by UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report built on the work of the inter-agency team established for the preparation of the previous reports on the subject. She drew particular attention to paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of the report on the need for contributions to the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund hosted by the Lebanon Recovery Fund.

34. **Mr. Haoliang Xu** (Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director of the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan (A/66/337). Twenty years had passed since the closing of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. Many people in the Pavlodar, East Kazakhstan and Karaganda regions continued to suffer the negative environmental, economic, social and humanitarian consequences of the fallout from the explosions.

35. Kazakhstan was a leader in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It had closed the nuclear test site and renounced its nuclear arsenal at an early stage of its independence. Shortly after closing the site the Government had introduced social protection and health-care interventions to help the population of the affected territories recover from the devastating consequences of the nuclear explosions.

36. The United Nations and the international community had supported the Government's efforts to overcome the challenges of rehabilitation. For example, in 1999 the Government of Japan and UNDP had convened the Tokyo International Conference on Semipalatinsk, which had been co-sponsored by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The Government of Kazakhstan's new Semipalatinsk Relief and Rehabilitation Programme, comprising projects in the areas of health, environment and ecology, economic recovery, humanitarian issues and information and advocacy, had received wide support at the Conference.

37. Although considerable progress had been accomplished over the years, the severity of the problems had thus far outweighed the efforts to resolve them. It was widely recognized that the time had come to move from a focus on recovery to a focus on long-term development and that the challenges could best be addressed through a comprehensive approach effectively linking the economic, social, environmental and health aspects through a strong partnership between the Government, the United Nations and all development partners. The need for such an approach was reflected in the General Assembly's request, in its resolution 63/279 on international cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan, that the Secretary-General should submit the report before the Committee under the item entitled "sustainable development". Previously, the topic had been considered under the item "humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation for selected countries and regions".

38. In response to that need, a new five-year regional development programme, "Raising competitiveness of the region through innovative approaches to regional planning and social services", had been launched in 2011. He urged development partners to respond to the call by the Secretary-General in the report to support the coordination mechanisms established through the new joint programme and to make use of the programme when planning their development assistance to the region with a view to enhancing its positive impact on people's lives.

39. **Mr. Mero** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that in the light of the disasters that had struck Japan earlier in 2011 he would appreciate knowing what steps countries should take to prepare for and respond to such emergencies. The report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction did not provide much information regarding how Japan had addressed those issues.

40. **Ms. Wahlström** (Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action) said that the Japanese Government was continuing to analyse the combination of factors that had left it so vulnerable despite its excellent disaster education programmes and very strong building codes. The tsunami generated by the earthquake and the location of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant had been the major factors.

41. Japan's analyses thus far pointed to three principal issues that all countries should address. First, the relevant authorities must understand the complexities of modern industry and that knowledge should be integrated into disaster management. Secondly, countries must adapt their building codes to their individual risk profiles, adequate infrastructure financing must be provided and the authorities must fully implement and enforce the codes.

42. Thirdly, although vulnerability to disasters declined as social and economic development improved, the exposure of cities to hazards was increasing because complex societies were being built precisely where disaster risks were highest. Difficult choices must therefore be made with respect to land-use planning, and public awareness of the potential consequences of decisions taken in that regard was critical. Following the devastating earthquake and tsunami in the Tohoku region of Japan, her conversations with residents of the area, who were very well informed about disaster risks, had borne out the importance of minimizing those risks in the first place.

43. **Mr. Sembayev** (Kazakhstan) expressed his delegation's appreciation for the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan and the introduction of the report by the Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director of the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. His delegation was most grateful for the joint activities being implemented in his country by a number of United Nations agencies.

44. **Mr. Bukuru** (Chief, New York Liaison Office of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Secretariat), replying to a question from **Mr. Tachie-Manson** (Ghana), said that "zero net land degradation" was a new concept but not a new practice. Its aim was to ensure that the loss of any land to degradation was offset by land restoration or reclamation. It was an attainable sustainable development target and would be discussed at the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

The meeting was suspended at 11.45 a.m. and resumed at 12.05 p.m.

45. **The Chair** pointed out that the order in which speakers would address the Committee in the discussion that was about to begin had been changed on an ad hoc basis pending further consultations and would be finalized later in the day.

46. **Mr. Limeres** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the three pillars of sustainable development — economic development, social development and environmental protection — must be taken into account in order to ensure a coordinated, integrated and balanced approach to its implementation. The multilateral framework for sustainable development was to be strengthened and the basic principles on which it was founded should not be renegotiated or retracted. The international community still faced the challenge of fulfilling commitments previously agreed on with respect to sustainable development and fully integrating its three pillars.

47. The Group's overriding priorities were poverty eradication and sustainable development. The financial, economic, food and energy crises and the shortage and unsustainable use of resources undermined the developing countries' efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It urged development partners to provide increased new and additional financing, technology transfer and capacity-building for the full and prompt implementation of sustainable development actions on the ground.

48. The Group of 77 and China looked forward to an outcome of the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development signalling renewed political commitment to the sustainable development agenda that would lead to the full implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to full support for the efforts of developing countries to achieve sustainable development. The Conference should aim to achieve concrete results with respect to financing and access to technology; identify measures to consolidate progress achieved and overcome remaining challenges; and highlight ways to address persistent, new and emerging issues. It also urged developed countries and international and bilateral donors to provide contributions to the Commission on Sustainable Development trust fund in order to enhance the active participation of representatives from developing countries in negotiations during the preparatory process of the Conference and in the Conference itself.

49. With regard to the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Group of 77 and China

reaffirmed its support for the efforts of those States to achieve sustainable development. They faced threats to their very existence, and their plight required urgent attention. The international community must honour the commitments it had made to small island developing States in the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy and their needs should be adequately addressed at the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development and reflected in its outcome document.

50. The Group of 77 and China reiterated its full support for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the policy guidance and coordination provided through the Strategy system and welcomed the results of the midterm review of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

51. All countries, particularly the developed countries, must deal with the challenges posed by climate change by adhering to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and to a second set of commitments under the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention. The root causes of climate change, not merely their consequences, must be addressed. The Group of 77 and China called for full operationalization of the Standing Committee of the financial mechanism of the Convention, the Technology Mechanism and the Adaptation Committee at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Durban, South Africa. The Parties to Annex II of the Convention should provide the developing countries with the resources and assistance called for in article 4, paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of the Convention, and adaptation and mitigation should both be adequately financed.

52. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was an important tool for achieving food security, poverty eradication and sustainable development and for promoting sustainable land use in drylands. The secretariats of the three Rio Conventions should enhance their cooperation at the national level, as well as with the United Nations organizations and agencies, while respecting their individual mandates. The Group underlined the relevance of the core issues of the Convention to Combat Desertification to the objectives and themes of the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development and emphasized the need to raise the profile of desertification, land degradation and drought among the priority issues to be addressed by the Conference.

53. The unsustainable use of resources threatened to increase poverty and undermine development. It was therefore necessary to promote action to prevent the loss of biodiversity and to attach a sense of urgency to achieving the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Group welcomed the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as the overarching biodiversity framework; the ongoing efforts to translate the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into national biodiversity strategies and action plans; and the decision to declare 2011-2020 the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. It also reaffirmed the importance of the Multi-year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development, which would be considered for adoption at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and it anticipated that United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development would renew and strengthen political commitment to the biodiversity protection agenda.

54. The Group of 77 and China took note of the report of the Governing Council of UNEP on its twenty-sixth regular session. Concrete measures should be taken to ensure the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, which was intended to improve developing countries' ability to address environmental challenges. The United Nations should substantially increase resource allocations to UNEP's regular budget in order demonstrate, in more than words, its commitment to addressing the world's dire environmental challenges.

55. With regard to the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, it was necessary to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources for sustainable development, taking into consideration the diversity of situations, national policies and specific needs of developing countries. It was also necessary to intensify research and development in support of energy for sustainable development, which required increased commitment by developed countries to deploy financial and human resources for accelerating research efforts. The developed countries should also take further action to mobilize financing, capacity-building and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies

to developing countries, as called for in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

56. **Mr. Acharya** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, called for a balanced and integrated approach to the three pillars of sustainable development. The key goals of poverty alleviation and intergenerational well-being should command close attention at the Conference on Sustainable Development, during its preparatory process and throughout the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. All States, including the least developed countries, should be able to provide input to the preparatory process and at the Conference itself.

57. The efforts of the least developed countries, particularly the poorest among them, to achieve the objectives of sustainable development were hampered by internal constraints and the disproportionate impact on them of external shocks, including the recent crises and climate change. The sustainable development of the least developed countries depended on the sincere, full, effective and timely implementation of all relevant commitments and plans of action. The sustainable development agenda should accord special priority to issues such as energy, water, sustainable agriculture, forests, food security, biodiversity, the marine environment and human and social development. The least developed countries required enhanced support if they were to make progress in those areas.

58. The 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development should call for the provision of new, additional, stable and predictable financing to the least developed countries and the implementation of all commitments regarding official development assistance made at international conferences, including the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020. The Conference on Sustainable Development should fully integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action into its outcome document.

59. It was also important to provide coordinated support and cooperation to the least developed countries in the areas of debt relief, market access, technology transfer, capacity-building, investment, climate finance and trade. The least developed countries called for an early, balanced, ambitious and development-oriented outcome of the Doha Development Round and, pending that outcome, agreement at the eighth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference on an "early harvest" package for those countries.

60. Multiple adverse impacts of climate change threatened to reverse some of the development gains which the least developed countries had achieved. In that connection, he emphasized the urgent need for a legally binding successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol. The sustainable development agenda should call for increased resources for adaptation and mitigation assistance for the least developed countries and their inclusion in the clean development mechanism. He also called for the establishment and full operationalization of the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund and equity and inclusiveness with respect to its governance and disbursements. Enhanced global commitment was needed to ensure a positive outcome at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2011.

61. The least developed countries were more vulnerable than others to the impacts of desertification, land degradation and drought. He called for comprehensive support for the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification, including assistance in mainstreaming desertification issues into development strategies. Biodiversity loss was another issue of concern to the least developed countries, which should be provided with increased, predictable, and timely financial support in order to deal with it.

62. Any process relating to the concept of a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication should take into account the special needs of countries such as the least developed countries. Furthermore, in view of the commitment made at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to enable half the number of least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation from the category, an institutional framework for sustainable development should call for strengthening the relevant entities within the United Nations system and provide enhanced support for the sustainable development of the least developed countries. Continued support for strengthened and effective voice and participation of least developed countries in relevant international forums should also be assured. Those countries also believed that a comprehensive approach that included all stakeholders

was a must for effective implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

63. Speaking as the representative of Nepal, a mountainous country, he said that mountain regions were among the most vulnerable to climate change and that, owing to low productivity and infrastructure limitations, their level of development generally was below that of other regions. Mountain regions contributed to water and ecosystem services downstream.

64. Nepal was home to the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, which served the countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. His country had also hosted important meetings on mountain development issues in 2010 and 2011, and was grateful to the Government of Switzerland for having organized the Lucerne World Mountain Conference held earlier in October. His country looked forward to the full integration of sustainable mountain development issues in the global sustainable development agenda as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the subject (A/66/294).

65. **Mr. Hart** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that all indicators of global sustainability pointed to the alarming state of the global environment. Climate change impacts were occurring much more quickly than previously forecast, as evidenced by the alarmingly higher rate of sea-level rise, which would eventually inundate some small island developing States and significantly alter life in others. If global emissions continued to rise at the current rate, it would be impossible to hold the rise in global mean temperatures below 2° C, let alone the safer 1.5° C advocated by over 100 developing countries.

66. Collective action was urgently needed to address the challenge of global sustainability. Despite their small size and inherent vulnerabilities CARICOM Member States had developed or were developing policies, strategies and plans as the basis for the transition to a greener, low-carbon economy while also addressing poverty eradication and sustainable development. The creation of a CARICOM Single Market and Economy, which would facilitate the movement of people, goods and service in the region, was well under way and the Association of Caribbean States worked to protect the Caribbean Sea, one of their most valuable resources.

67. A supportive international environment was crucial to the success of those undertakings. Financial and technological resources for the developing countries must be scaled up and international governance reforms were needed in order to ensure a greater voice for developing countries in decision-making, norm-setting and realigning the mandates of some institutions to reflect current realities. As preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development intensified, CARICOM called on all Member States to reject business as usual and incremental improvements and prepare to confront the complex challenges of global sustainability collectively and with a sense of urgency and heightened ambition.

68. CARICOM believed that the Conference outcome must, inter alia, recognize that small island developing States continued to be a special case for sustainable development and that, owing to their unique vulnerabilities, they faced unique and increasing challenges over and above those affecting other developing countries. Moreover, small island developing States did not have the capacity to cope with such issues and their efforts during the past two decades to achieve sustainable development had been undermined by an international environment that was unsupportive and insensitive to their needs.

69. The Conference outcome must also urge the international community to honour all commitments to small island developing States, including those contained in Agenda 21, the Barbados Programme of Action, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Mauritius Strategy. The international community should be urged to adopt and implement policies to address the special needs of small island developing States and adopt a more coherent, coordinated and collaborative approach in support of their sustainable development. The Conference should further agree to convene a third Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in 2014 to review progress on the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy.

70. CARICOM was committed to working towards an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive outcome at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban later in 2011. CARICOM continued to be concerned by the absence of a sense of

urgency and ambition in some quarters, including calls by some countries to postpone a comprehensive response to the frightening threats of climate change.

71. He wished to highlight three of CARICOM's priorities for the Parties. First, the Conference must ensure the full operationalization of all institutional elements of the Cancun Agreements, including the Green Climate Fund; the Adaptation Committee; the 2013-2015 review of the long-term global goal of limiting warming to 2° C; and the mitigation package, including measuring, reporting and verification of the mitigation commitments and actions of developed and developing countries, respectively. The Green Climate Fund must be operationalized in Durban and CARICOM urged developed countries to begin making pledges for its start-up and initial capitalization so that its operationalization would be credible and its Board could begin work early in 2012.

72. Secondly, the Parties must strengthen the multilateral rule-based, legally binding climate change regime by agreeing to a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol with more ambitious mitigation targets than those currently on the table. Agreement should also be reached on the parameters and time frame for a new legally binding instrument under the Convention. The instrument should be comprehensive in scope, build on existing instruments such as the Kyoto Protocol and ensure the provision of financing and technology to guarantee a more secure future for the countries most vulnerable to climate change.

73. Thirdly, the Parties must address unresolved issues such as providing long-term finance to enable developing countries to undertake urgent adaptation and mitigation actions before the finalization of the new instrument.

Organization of work

74. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that he strongly believed that the meeting should be suspended so that urgent informal consultations which had begun earlier could continue.

75. **Mr. Hart** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) noted that more than 60 Member States were inscribed on the list of speakers and the Committee still had 15 minutes to hear further statements. Informal consultations could continue during the lunch hour.

76. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that he had asked for a suspension because he had noticed that the list of speakers was no longer posted. Before the meeting continued he wished to understand why the list had been removed.

77. **Mr. Hart** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that perhaps the Chair could read out the next few names on the list of speakers, to avoid losing the 15 minutes that were left.

78. **The Chair** said that the Bureau had discussed the order of speakers after objections had been raised by the representatives of Indonesia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Group of Small Island Developing States. The Bureau had then decided on the order of speakers for the rest of the day. It was purely an ad hoc arrangement and would apply only that day.

79. The representatives who would address the Committee next were, in the following order: the representative of Nauru, on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States; the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; the European Union; the representative of Australia, on behalf of CANZ, by special arrangement; and the representative of Qatar, who had asked to switch from the afternoon list to the morning list. He pointed out that only 10 minutes now remained for statements at the current meeting.

80. **Mr. Hart** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Ambassadors of Nauru and Indonesia, who had been waiting all morning to address the Committee, should be allowed to speak at the current meeting. Informal consultations could be held during the lunch break.

81. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, reiterated his preference to continue the debate in the afternoon. The issue to be discussed in informal consultations required prompt attention. In addition, an important meeting with the President of the General Assembly would begin very soon.

82. **The Chair** pointed out that under Rule 118 of the Committee's Rules of Procedure, motions to suspend or adjourn the meeting could not be debated. If a formal motion was made to do so, it must be immediately put to the vote. He needed to know

whether the representative of Poland was making a formal motion.

83. **Mr. Hart** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that it would be inappropriate to suspend the debate on an issue of global significance because of concerns regarding the placement of a delegation on the list of speakers. Two or three of the speakers on the list the Chair had read out could be given the floor before the meeting ended. The consultations could follow during the lunch hour. He was simply asking the representative of Poland on behalf of the European Community to reconsider his position. He would have to consult with CARICOM Member States on the issue.

84. **The Chair** reminded delegations that he could not allow a debate on the matter.

85. **Mr. Rangel** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that he agreed that the debate should not be interrupted because a delegation objected to its location on the list of speakers. Other committees were having similar discussions. He urged the representative of Poland to be flexible and agree to speak after the country groups had addressed the Committee.

86. **Mr. Torrington** (Guyana) said that he agreed with the representatives of Barbados and Venezuela. The matter raised by the representative of Poland had been under discussion for some time and its consideration did not warrant suspension of the meeting.

87. **Mr. Silberberg** (Germany) said that he agreed with the representative of Poland that prompt further discussion of the matter was appropriate.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.